spectrum 2010
literary and fine arts magazine

2010
literary and fine arts magazine

spectrum

Literary Staff

editor in chief Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

editorial staff Stephen Carnaggio
Nicole Propst
Kayla Richardson
Sarah Thomas
Matthew Wells

advisors Carol Sapora
Gerald Majer

Design

design and production Carol Bandura
Karissa Wingate

advisor Susan Osborn

Photography of all artwork graciously donated by Stevenson faculty member Jefferson Steele.

Thanks to Amanda Hostalka for coordinating the artwork submission process and for acting as our consultant.

Spectrum is supported by funding from Stevenson's English Department.

http://spectrum.stevenson.edu/

©2010 Stevenson University, Stevenson, Maryland
All individual copyrights revert to authors and artists.

Spectrum 2010
Table of Contents

literature

1 A Painter's Canvas
Nikki Norris

2 I Hate 4 Square
Jennifer Cecchetti

4 Ere You Go
Justin Poe

Gems
Maura Bernstein

5 The Sea and Me
Cathy Kerns

6 Green Petals
Nikki Norris

7 Weird Place
Noah Kain

8 Fire and Ice
Cathy Kerns

The Best Time to Cry
Tenae Smith

9 Earth and Moon
Elyse Chaprnka

Love Sucks
Megan Smith

Contemplating
Noah Kain

10 First Date Boys
Christine Ivory

11 Our Dance
Michael Manning

12 The Anger
Jasmine LeMaster

13 Stretching spindle thin...
Jason Van Slyke

H1N1
Jim Curran

Hope
Elyse Chaprnka

14 Finch Jersey
Nicole Propst

16 Greek Festival
Jim Curran

The City's Lights...
Cathy Kerns

Energy crisis...
Bill Talbott

17 Baltimore Renaissance
Harold Shaffer

18 Like a Byrd
Tricia Dove

Think of today now...
Jason Van Slyke

19 Pennies, No Sense
Carolyn Bozman

20 Oh, right, "freedom."
Noah Kain

21 At Close Range
Christine Ivory

22 Breathtakingly Unaware
Iyana Moore

23 Princess Over Heels
Kayla Richardson

Charlie's Pin-Up Girl Tattoo
Jasmine LeMaster

24 La Geleuse
Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

25 My Shadow is All I See
Justin Poe

Dad
Harold Shaffer

Follow Me
Nicole Propst

26 The Mile-Wide Storm
David Brannon

28 Teacher
Jim Curran

Colorblind
Anonymous

29 Mahogany
Stephen Carnaggio

30 For My Soldier
Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

31 Something to Hold onto
Wes Parlette

32 Solutions to Life
Maura Bernstein

33 Behind the Curtain
Stefani Beser

34 Maypoles & Pistols
Kayla Richardson

Ba Ba Black Sheep
Erin Perkins

Colors
Elyse Chaprnka

Very few degrees...
Bill Talbott

35 A Daydreamer's Day
Jesse Graber

36 Speeding Down Memory Lane
Stephen Carnaggio

art

39 Train of Thought
Erin Perkins

40 LIVE
S. Tylor Githens

WALK
S. Tylor Githens

41 Sonado
Stephen Carnaggio

42 Alone in a crowd...
Bill Talbott

Shadows of the past...
Jason Van Slyke

43 In Memory
Elyse Chaprnka

Night Journey
Harold Shaffer

1 **Jury Rubeling-Kain**
Bryan Vana

2 **Brooke Gilley**

4 **Brittany Lewis**

5 **Lenee Freeman**

6 **Alexa Carney**

7 **Brooke Gilley**
Renae Hunter

8 **Heather Leigh**

9 **Brianna Bolling**

11 **Elyse Chaprnka**

12 **Carol Bandura**
Jury Rubeling-Kain

13 **Sylwia Surowiec**
Brianna Bolling

14 **Brooke Gilley**

15 **Renae Hunter**

16 **Joyce Yan**

17 **Audrey Lawrence**
Heather Leigh

18 **Mary Underwood**

19 **Casey Williams**

20 **Carol Bandura**
Kellie Gable

21 **Elyse Chaprnka**

22 **Brittany Lewis**

23 **Kellie Gable**

24 **Brianna Bolling**

25 **Lauren DeSha**
Brooke Gilley

28 **Joyce Yan**

29 **Lennee Freeman**

30 **Bryan Vana**

31 **Corrine Thompson**

32 **Mary Underwood**

33 **Lauren DeSha**
Audrey Lawrence

34 **Bryan Vana**

36 **Renae Hunter**

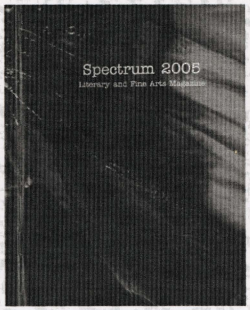
37 **Brianna Bolling**

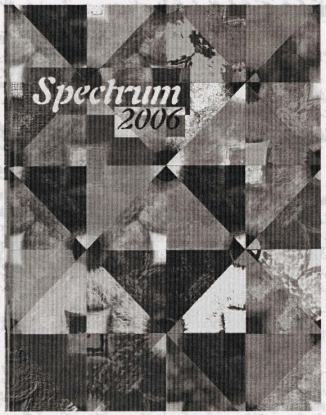
40 **Bryan Vana**

41 **Elyse Chaprnka**
Joyce Yan

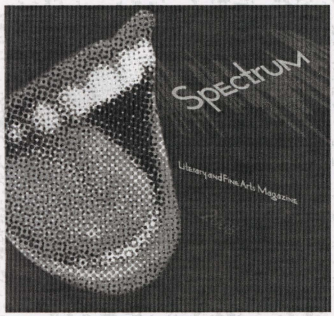
42 **Jury Rubeling-Kain**
Renae Hunter

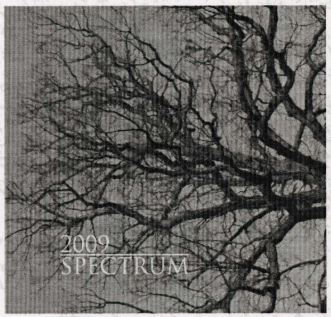
43 **Lenee Freeman**





This issue of *Spectrum* is dedicated with gratitude to Professor Carol Sapora, founder of the magazine and longtime faculty advisor and mentor, who through the years has been a support and inspiration for new writers and new writing at Stevenson University.





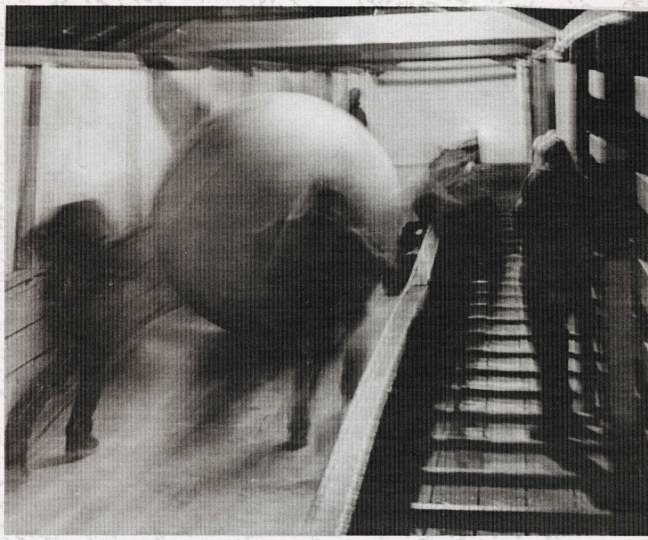
A Painter's Canvas

Nikki Norris

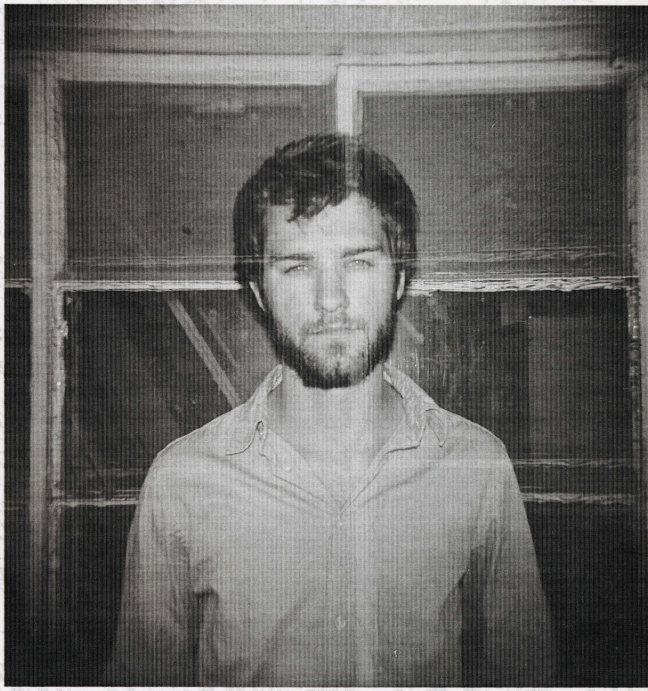
I awoke on Sunday morning
eyes opening to a pool of white
my feet aching on the chilled concrete
walking across
a silent bridge built out of regret.
The room I entered was silent. You were
gone.
Your disconnected body haunting four red walls
In a room where two faces smiled days before.

Green ovals over-washing the red
painting oily rays on clear liquid
dismantling the fur on the thinly woven string.
A rainbow of powder permeating the
bridge with screaming, calloused wood.
Ash filtering five bottles of February.

My salted fingers grasping for the red
but always bleeding green
Orphaned absolution is apparent
the rotten wood linearly anchors the stale lime water
sick with rusted grief
of having failed.
The emerald rope snaps
You disappear.



Jury Rubeling-Kain



Bryan Vana

I Hate 4 Square

Jennifer Cecchetti

Brooke Gilley

The whistle is blown. Recess has officially begun. The 30 minutes of freedom from the long and treacherous 5th grade school day was finally here. A time to let loose, a time for hyperactive 9 year olds to create pure mayhem! The playground equipment was always bare. The only occupants were the stinky kids who peed their pants the first day of school and whose reputations since had never improved. They were and would always be the pee-pee pants kids. Joining them on the splinter producing wooden playground were the babyish kids – the kids whose ideas of recess involved growling and barking like little woodland creatures while chasing each other. Pfft. Amateurs. The real 5th graders…they knew what was up.

The remainder of the recess field was divided into two sections: the kickball boys, and the 4 square girls. The occasional wall ball game was also at times thrown into the mix, but very seldom. All of the kids knew the rules to these games. If a boy played 4 square - he was a sissy boy who liked to wear make up and dress in his momma's skirts. If a girl played kickball she was a tomboy, and the little boys didn't accept her. If a girl would go to kick she would be embarrassed as the pitcher called for all the boys in the outfield to "move in closer, move in closer."

I always hated 4 square. I didn't like the other little girls and their stupid made up rules. They had rules for everything. Stepping over the line was an automatic disqualification, bouncing the ball too high was cheating, and inviting a pee-pee pants kid over to play was strictly *prohibited*. I decided to be a non-conformist and ruin my reputation of being a regular girl. This was a very drastic decision to make. Joining the kickball game practically eliminated girls from the whole girl world of gossip. At the lunch table, you were no longer involved in the whispers and giggles – the whispering was about you.

I was not your typical nine-year old girl. I often wore completely dreadful overalls, hand-me-down shirts from my older brother, and dirty running shoes to school. These boyish outfits fit in perfectly with my short brown curly hair. Often times, when I was viewed from the back, teachers and other adults would mistakenly say, "Excuse me sir?" There was one time I can remember where I wore a yellow flowing sundress to impress my next door neighbor only to be mortified as the little boy with the silver bicycle exclaimed, "Why is a boy wearing a dress!?"

This wasn't very beneficial to my self-esteem which I think correlated directly with my extremely introverted, shy personality. I had friends, but not many. I was usually more of a teacher's pet than a popular tween.

Luckily for me I had one great friend. Her name was Emily and she, like me, was an outcast who enjoyed learning, writing, and reading. Both of us were tired of 4 square since we never even got to play. There was a sort of social hierarchy which determined the

order that each person would come in and play. Somehow we were always placed last, and then the girls who got out before us would sneak in front of us and laugh when we accused them of "butting."

She decided that she would follow me as I attempted to enter the boy's world of kickball. We decided that jumping into the already-started kickball game would be a bad idea. Taking "little steps" was the best idea we could come up with. We grabbed one of the rejected, deflated kick balls and went to an open area of the field to play kick back. Kick back, now that was playing it safe. I could view the whole game from the sidelines while continuing to increase the power in my kicks. I had a large ego. I knew that I was the best girl kicker in the 5th grade. After 3 days of strenuous kick back action, I was prepared.

It was a Friday. Friday always signified the play off kickball game where all the boys from my class would play against the boys of the 5th grade class one portable down. I was pumped. My "boyfriend" (if you want to call it that), Andrew, was the best kickball player in the school. He kicked the farthest, caught the best, and ran the fastest. Andrew had been the new kid when 5th grade began and somehow over a social studies Wax Museum project where he loaned me a stethoscope for my doctor costume, he and I became boyfriend and girlfriend. He had long flowing blonde hair and was mistaken for a girl frequently, so he and I being together was undoubtedly a perfect match. He was ten, which made him older and far more mature than most of the other 5th graders who were only nine. He had faith in me to play kickball with him and the boys and encouraged me to stay and "try it out at least" as I casually tried to sneak away.

Emily backed out at the last minute and decided that she just couldn't play kickball. It was against the girl code of morals. I started crying to her behind the portable because I was scared to death of being rejected. She apologized and gave me a hug and then slowly retreated to the 4 square game, leaving me stranded heading towards a swarm of sweaty, stinky, boys. They looked at me funny and replied, "What…?" as if I was some kind of icky lump of chewed gum stuck to their lunch table. I told them that I would be joining them and if they had a problem with it then Andrew wouldn't play on their team. This really caught their attention, threatening the victory of my class's team. They rolled their eyes and sighed while agreeing to let me play. Yes. I was actually allowed to play…as long as I didn't get in their way.

I was on the home plate. I watched as the ugly, buck-toothed, freckle-faced pitcher issued his teammates to "move in closer, move in closer." He rolled the ball. A perfect roll, slow and bouncy…

One bounce, two bounces, three bounces…

And there I go, kicking my right foot out and pounding that red sphere over all of their heads all the way to the grassy area beyond the blacktop.

Everyone was cheering as I sprinted around first base, I ran onward to second as I saw the shocked boys scrambling to retrieve the ball. I continued to third base, my heart pounding and a huge grin plastered on my face. "I, I, I did it," I thought to myself.

And then it hit me –

Literally.

A huge rush of force to my face sent me crashing to the ground halfway between third base and home. Blood gushed out of my nose as I lay crying. All of the spectators watched me with huge eyes and their mouths wide open. Emily started crying on the second square of the chalk drawn 4 square board. The teachers came rushing towards me. Little Phillip Wester was puking in the outfield.

This will give the girls something to whisper about Monday at lunch. ❖

Gems

Maura Bernstein

My feet are sinking into the wet sand as the tide flushes by, covering everything in crystal droplets of water. The wind is blowing so strongly I can't keep my eyes open for the picture because my hair is falling onto my face. I strike a pose, attempting to flex like my dad does. He's in the picture too, right next to me, flexing his own muscles, though his are exceedingly more impressive than mine. He's wearing his Bahamas fish shirt, the most comfortable of all his clothing, and I know once I get cold, that shirt is mine. I'm content now; everything is at peace and my family is happy. I remember thinking that would never change.

Ere You Go

Justin Poe

Ev'ry morn ere the Sun awakes
A young love stripped of silver and white
Flies aloft my nest
Awoken, I catch a bare glimpse
And pluck a feather to hold forever
Giving each a name
One day to come I shall follow this love
Fanning each breath, shall not rest
Till I have her under my wing
Under my wing, sing and sing, to her forever and ever

Brittany Lewis

The Sea and Me

Cathy Kerns

I sit and dig my fingers in the saturated sand,
my seat carefully placed amidst the washed up weeds.
Too scared to let myself be tossed amongst the waves,
I observe her power, her majesty, and her foamy locks.

So free and yet at times so restless, the Sea and Me.
She's soft and gentle, a cradle for the living.
She can make you move, she can make you die.
I cannot contend with her, she is too strong for me.

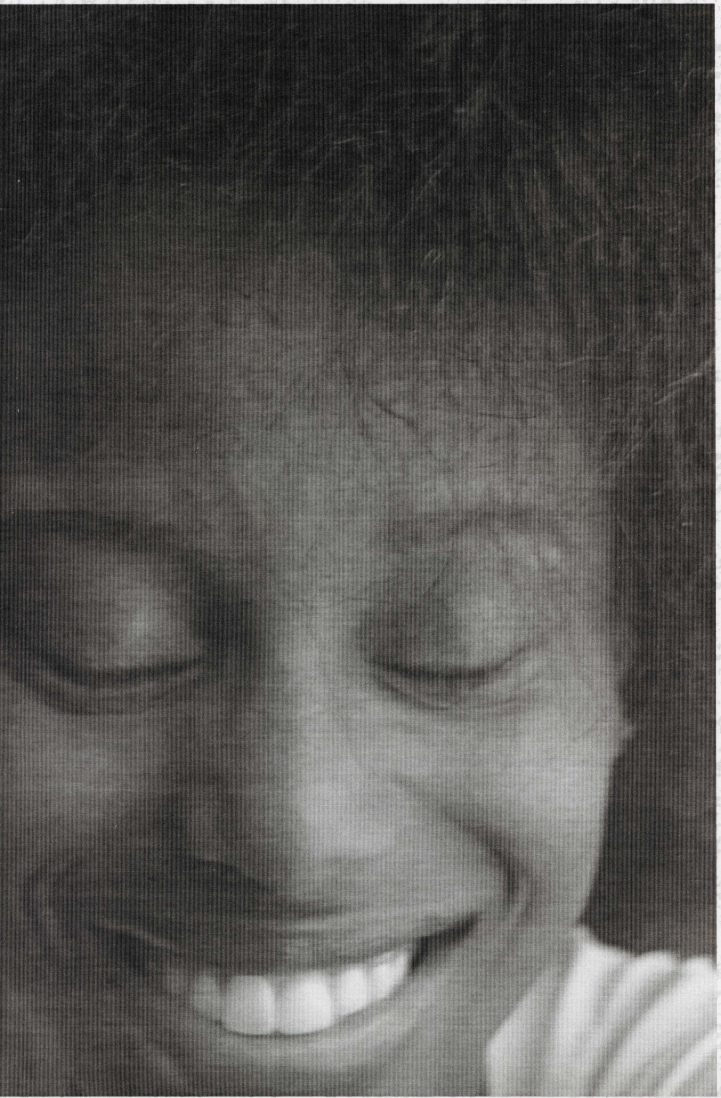
If only in form of spirit, I exist in her.
In me, she exists in aspiration and longing.
I cannot give myself to her completely, for
she seduces and I fear her liquid fingers on my throat.

Even when she invites me kindly, and I acquiesce to descend.
Though fleeing swiftly, life takes hold again.
I can feel it; I can smell her wrath all around me,
her salty remnants linger on my tongue.

We are separated by matter, by bones, and skin, and teeth
Though she is me, and I am her if only in memory.
She dances in and out, grasping for my soul.
I sit and watch and wonder what will become of

The Sea and Me.

Lenee Freeman



Green Petals

Nikki Norris

thick with jagged edges,
surrounding the base of your mindless breathing,

closing,
suffocating.
Blocks of green patched denial.

you sprinkle the emerald colored petals
across the icy brass.

frost begging to bite the fragile state of decaying steel.

shriveling

you begin to fall
beneath…

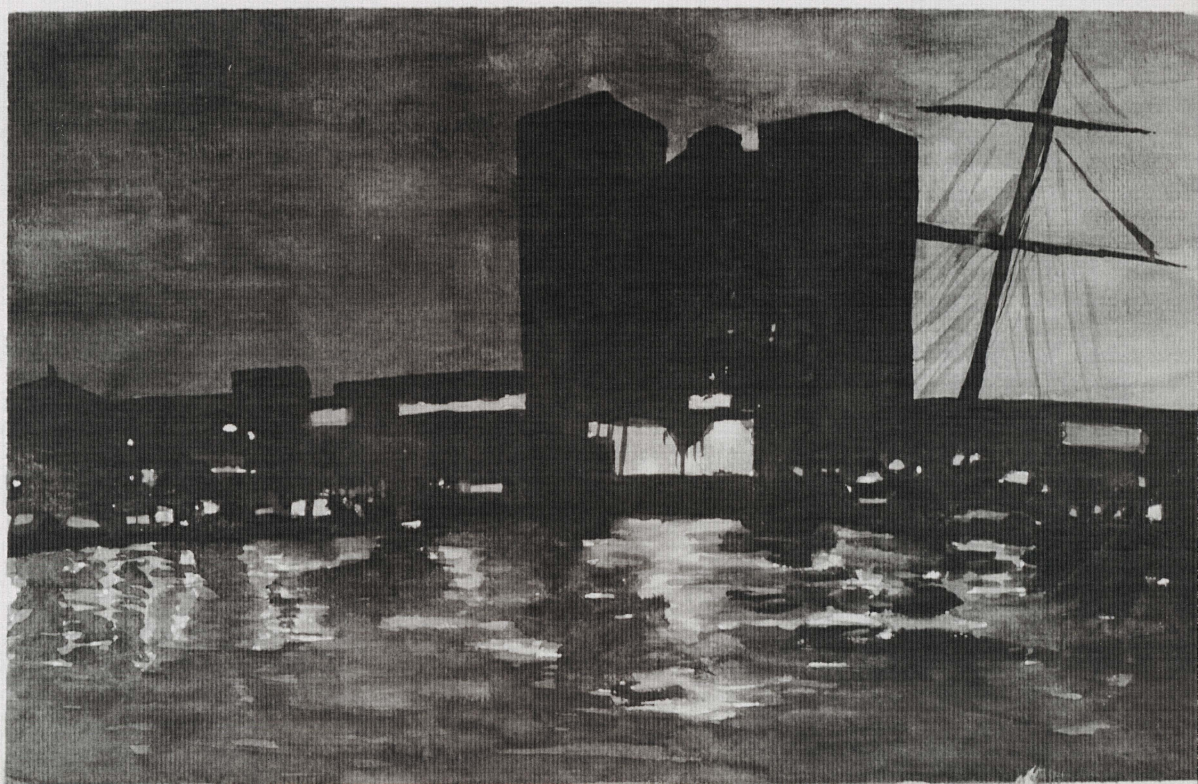
Alexa Carney

Renae Hunter

Weird Place

Noah Kain

Sometimes I go to this
weird place
of unhappy
floating,
a static mess,
a weird place.
But it's cool man,
that weird place
is enlightening.
I love you weird place.



Brooke Gilley

Fire and Ice

Cathy Kerns

There's only one sound
that brings me back home.
Crisp and sharp
as the blade digs in.
Carving lines and edges.
Inside.
Outside.
Unnatural and right all at once,
a beautiful bending body.
A lonely, frozen canvas
where matter meets matter
and Science makes art.
Jump up.
Fall down.

I remember my hands
pulling the laces.
Red, hot, and white.
Step on and go.
Fluid makes grace.
Fire,
meets ice.

The Best Time to Cry

Tenae Smith

The best time to cry
is when you are alone in the shower.
Let the poignant tears roll down your cheek
and blend with the water.

Let your fears and frustrations
flow from your head down to your toes
and down the drain.
Cry until you can't cry no more.

The best time to cry
is when you are alone in the shower
where no one can ask you why
your eyes and nose are red.

The best way to let go is to wash it all away.
Lather up with faith.
Scrub hard with hope.

Then rinse away the troubles that
built upon your skin.
Take a deep breath and
let it all go.

Heather Leigh

Contemplating

Noah Kain

Have you seen that big silver chain stretching on and on and on and on?
An extra link for every day the world still spins on its axis
Coiling, though never clanking, and building up and up and up and up!
Up so high its glimmer can be seen for miles
Seen for miles, praised for miles, praised by every soul that it holds
Beneath its mighty, sweaty, all-consuming, narcissistic grip.

Today is going to be the last day, though
The last day of silver links and coiling, clanking, praising captives
Ground down to their knees until all they know how to do is smile
And I must point out that it is their knees, not mine,
For my knees will be taut, as my arms raise above my head,
Oscillating through gravity with a weapon to be announced
And beating, breaking, every last link until I am free.

At least that's what I told myself yesterday.

Brianna Bolling

Earth and Moon

Elyse Chaprkna

Comets falling like rain
No wishes left to grant
When the earth is like the moon
Barren

Love Sucks

Megan Smith

I love you
I love you not
Forget me
Forget me not
I need you
I need you not
You want me
You want me not

I need you to want me
I want you to love me
Don't ever forget me
Always be here with me
FOREVER

Love sucks.

The First Date Boys

Christine Ivory

Sam

Sam was always more attractive in person than I would remember him. In his absence, I always dulled his appearance – made his hair more lank, his eyes less bright, his posture more stooped. This was perhaps because he was the least photogenic, but otherwise attractive, person I've ever met. He decided we would have the classic date – dinner and a movie. Various disasters struck; his lab went late, my meeting ran over, and it turned into a purely movie date. He chose *The Brave One*, which seemed like a good idea at the time, as it had gotten marvelous reviews. The movie was rife with gore and violence and I spent most of the movie yelping and hiding behind my hands while he sat at the edge of his seat, entranced. It was a first date that was a last date, to the pleasure of all involved.

Todd

Todd obtained an unfortunate nickname almost right away. I had shown a few pictures of him to my roommates and, in one photo, he was leaning over a Go table, smiling his wolfish grin. He was wearing a rather unflattering maroon sweater that was overly generous in the pectoral region. As a result, he appeared to have the saggy chest of someone at least one hundred pounds more than he. His nickname thus became Boobalie Todd, despite his perfectly normal proportions. We went out to lunch at Noodles and Company, where I found very few dishes of much appeal. I settled with some sort of macaroni and cheese bowl and then proceeded to become sick from the excess of cheese. I ate about half before it was time for us to go back to our respective occupations and then, after he had driven off, ran back inside to be aggressively ill. I saw Boobalie Todd just one more time, a movie date that I often consider our first date, since the Cheese Incident was only an hour long lunch break. That night we watched *Transformers* and I avoided his tongue ring, which terrifies me to this day. We had a falling out shortly after and, a year later, I'm just beginning to be friends with Boobalie Todd again.

Patrick

This was another guy with a nickname, though of a more flattering origin. One night, Patrick invited me to go out to a restaurant where his friend worked. It was a little Italian place in the city and I got all dressed up. The food was good but pretty much your standard Italian cuisine. However, for dessert, while I was in the restroom, Patrick ordered a lemon gelato with two spoons, since I told him I was rather full. We shared the gelato while I glowed with how cliché and simultaneously cute the situation was. His moniker then became Two-Spoons Patrick. A friend once misheard me and thought that I said I was going out with Two-Spoons OF Patrick- which caused Patrick then to become associated with Raisin Bran for the rest of the time we were dating.

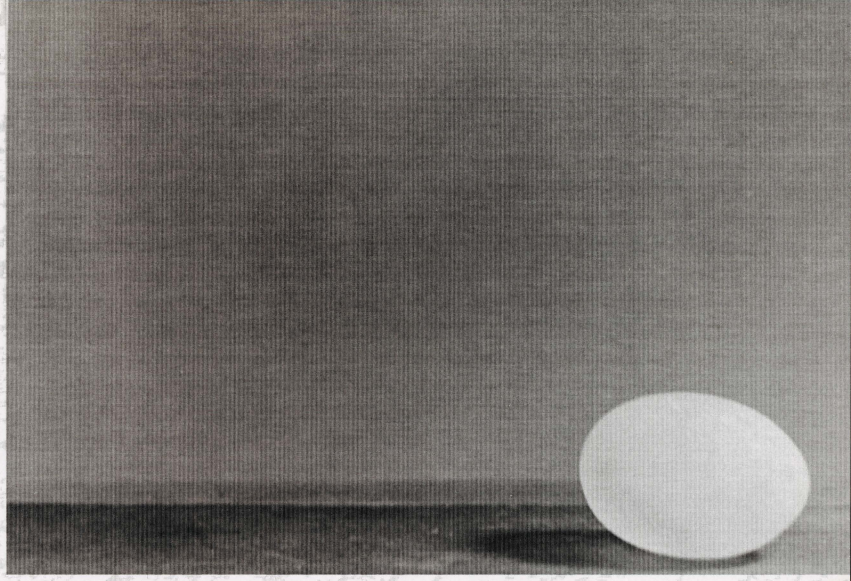
Shaun

Shaun was one to always try his hardest to impress. Our date was supposed to be ice-skating, but we never made it to the rink. The weather was blustery and we contented ourselves with fresh tiramisu and videogames. His house intimidated me; the designer plush couches matched the color palette of the walls, which nicely complimented the heavy draperies. I found out later that his mother took a very large role

in decorating everything of his, as she was highly intrusive with far too much spare time now that her children were all grown up. His nickname was One-Up Shaun, named for his ability to one-up Patrick, who had become boring shortly after he ordered the gelato with two spoons. The nickname served two purposes as he was a video game programmer and 'one-up' is a term from the classic Mario video games. Eventually, we did go ice skating and it was highly anticlimactic; I struck out from the ice rink wall, bent on learning to skate, falling many times while Shaun hugged the wall for dear life, but didn't fall once. Later, we both agreed heartily that it would have been a dreadful first date because, by the end of it, One-Up Shaun felt thoroughly demasculinized while I felt thoroughly sore.

John

I thought John was a great guy. He was an under-appreciated geek who lacked most social skills and tried too hard in every aspect of life. Most guys I've dated could be summed up with that very sentence; however, John went above and beyond the norm, perhaps not in the best way. He was notoriously bad at reading body language and would argue silly topics until they were no longer fun and his opponent was glowing red with anger. He meant well. He was an introvert by nature and, when taken to parties and social gatherings, he seemed to make a point to spill at least three drinks. When I first went out with John, I saw him as the mildly possessive type, which is an adorable characteristic. I later found out that he did not have a light and amusing possessive inclination, but rather a jealous, overprotective, and controlling attitude as a result of a low self-esteem. I criticized his inability to read people, but, in the end, I failed to read him correctly. ❖



Elyse Chaprnka

Our Dance

Michael Manning

Trailing you down in the skies;
The heavens duplicate a sequence
devoted to our own elusive dance.
It is the same schedule with every dawn
as each morning repeats this discord.
The violet breaks the silence of night
And the crimson is unveiled.
Thus the pursuit prolongs,
Leaving the results for all who can see,
That I shall always be in need of you
and negotiating from my knees.
We disappear in the twilight's dance
As the sun takes control
and erases our existence.
It's the same routine every day.
It's the same routine; you slip away.

The Anger

Jasmine LeMaster

Bodies for money, sex for money
Injecting girls with heroin so they will not fight
So they will be bought and sold

Like cattle

And raped and raped and raped
And my peers find it funny to dress as pimps and hoes for Halloween. Can't they understand??

The rapper says
All I see is pussy
Titties
And the ass

And we are so much more than this

My mind rejects god for this patriarchy
Rejects capitalism for this patriarchy
Rejects the fucking MAN for his inequality

For his judgment

I would like to throw bombs at the Miss America pageant and judges

Continuing our oppression with their superficial wants
Their material wants
Is Miss America really the best representation of women we can find?

Forget intelligence,
Screw morality.
No, they will judge on bikini bods and big hair.

Is putting plastic in our bodies truly for us?
Breasts are for feeding babies, not for the pleasure of men
And we judge
and judge
and judge ourselves.
This is the anger I live with.

Jury Rubeling-Kain

Carol Bandura

H1N1

Jim Curran

This won't hurt a bit,
said the captain, as
the firing squad loaded
their weapons. Doctors
give the same speech
when administering flu
shots.

Haiku

Jason Van Slyke

Stretching spindle thin
thoughts crash like a waterfall
or gently trickle

Sylwia Surowiec

Brianna Bolling

Hope

Elyse Chaprnka

Pennies for lives
Dimes for cures
Nickels for freedom
Quarters for land

We save bit by bit
But not too fast
Tick tock tick tock

Something is gone

The Finch Jersey

Nicole Propst

Brooke Gilley

My Jennie Finch softball jersey hangs limp upon an ugly pink-hued chair shoved against a stark white wall. I love that red, white, and blue Team USA uniform worn by my sports idol. My dad gave it to me after I made varsity as a high school freshman.

Back then, I was never the kind of girl to go to house parties thrown by the "popular" crowd. And it wasn't as if I was the low girl on the totem pole either. I'd been captain of our varsity softball team sophomore through senior year. We even won the state championships three out of my four years. My D-1 scholarship had been in the bag by the close of my first season.

No, I think my disinterest was largely due to my rigid moral upbringing, complete with church on Sundays and family Bible times during the week. Dad would bring out that old worn leather Bible and we'd all stop what we were doing just to listen. That was before dad lost his job and cracked under the shame of not being able to provide for his family of six like always. That was when he became fused to the bottle, too. I'd never seen him drink more than a beer in my entire life, but he did during those eighteen months of unemployment, and it made me feel sick to my stomach to watch. I guess that counts as my other turn-off to the whole drinking scene.

When he finally got another job, that God-awful drinking habit haunted him, plagued his every attempt at getting his life and family back on the straight and narrow. He'd become dependent upon it like a heroin addict to his drug. We'd try to hide the alcohol whenever he brought it home. We'd check account balances and credit card statements to see if he'd withdrawn money or frequented the liquor store that day, so we'd know to look for it and what to expect.

In the end, it was futile. Defeated and powerless, my mom started sleeping in the spare bedroom down the hall because he'd hit her sometimes in an occasional drunken rage. He'd apologize afterward, but I still hated him for that. Mom said to pray. When that didn't work, I threw myself more obsessively into my game and studies, anything besides what was going on at home. Dad sure wasn't doing any praying or soul-searching on our accounts anymore.

And then, one night, five days before my graduation, the phone rang as the family sat around the dinner table, wondering when dad would be stumbling in from "working late."

That phone call changed my life forever. My dad never even saw that stop sign or noticed that he was drifting into headlights. The medical examiner would later say that he'd have been too drunk to see anything clearly, much less a dumb red sign screaming at him to hit the brakes. Luckily the old man in the Ford F150 survived with minimal injuries. My dad's silver Honda Civic was smashed in like an empty soda can. And as I sat there in church, all decked out in black, two days before my graduation, I vowed to God that I would never touch a drop of alcohol to save my life.

But I was weak and I broke that promise as soon as I went off to Arizona State on my full athletic scholarship that fall. In the off-season, it started out with a beer here and there at some jock's house party. Next thing I knew I was going to parties several nights a week and I wasn't having just one beer anymore. It was more like a grand slam of beer, vodka, wine, and other hard liquors. I became just as pathetic and sad as my late father and that depressed me, made me feel like a failure, too. But it was easier just to pretend that I didn't care anymore. He'd always been my biggest fan and I knew I'd never see him standing on the sidelines again as I ran out onto that beloved green and brown diamond, the swell of the crowd's cheers making my head drunk with exhilaration. He was dead. And, contrary to Hollywood screenplays, the dead don't come back to life.

Still, as I lie here in a stiff bed in a stark white room of some hospital in Arizona, my family thousands of miles away, entirely alone - the florescent lights half blinding me, an IV dripping vital fluids into my overly intoxicated 127-pound, 5'9" frame - my sallow skin flushes crimson with shame. I should have never gone to that stupid "Start-of-Summer" party. You see, I almost died last night and I have no recollection of it. Not a single minute. They say alcohol poisoning has that effect.

"You're lucky to be alive, young lady," the doctor had said when I'd finally resurfaced from my self-induced stupor. Lucky. Right. I guess I'm just stupid and selfish. An unfit role-model for my younger siblings.

Like father like daughter.

I hear the nurse walk in, announcing I have a visitor.

"Mommy?" I say, reverting to my childhood lingo.

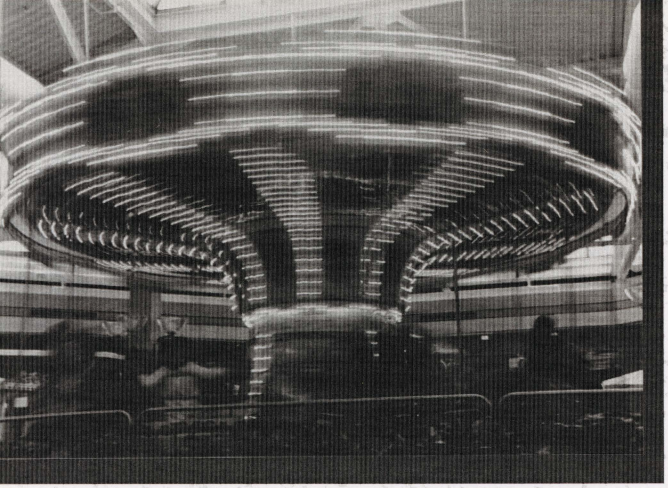
"Oh baby, I was so worried. They kept saying you were going to die," my mom sobs, running over to my limp form swaddled in a starched white blanket. "I got here as fast as I could. The church bought me a plane ticket."

"Oh Mom," I croak, "I'm so sorry. About everything."

As I lie there crying into my mother's forgiving and loving arms, we are both aware that today marks the two year anniversary of Dad's death. Staring at that irreplaceable Finch jersey, I can almost hear him whisper, "Honey, you haven't even gotten to the Olympics yet."

"Don't worry, Dad," I think back to him with a resolved smile, leaning against my mother's tearstained shirt. "I will." ❖

Renae Hunter



Joyce Yan

Haiku

Bill Talbott

Energy crisis,
Enron and Constellation.
Watch your money go.

Greek Festival

Jim Curran

Some sang of Athens
Traditional romps of Horos
Balalaikan fiery chords of joy
Gasped swallows of Retsina
Zorban yelps of intoxication
Skirts rising in folly
Hearts throbbed of hope
Through wafts of pastitsio
Cradled in layers of warmth
East Baltimore festivals
Cling to lapping of the Aegean.

The City's Lights...

Cathy Kerns

The City's lights are the Sirens to my soul,
incandescence bringing me to fruition,
and
to freedom.

I am possessed with a lightness,
carried up from my toes.
And a desire to be dangerous,
to talk with strangers.

To have my heels meet the street,
with faux purpose and estrangement.
Let me pretend I am not
who I never knew I was.

It is much easier to fake than to admit.
But my escape is still so profound,
don't you think?
I think.

I think it means more to me
than it shall ever to you.
It is much easier to choose anger
than to remember the unflattering truth.

I am alone,
yet I find solace in that which amazes me.
From ignorance to beauty,
and all those misunderstandings.

Baltimore Renaissance

Harold Shaffer

The day I purged myself of whiskey
I woke up nearly honest
A year after the time bomb,
Ticking away for twenty years,
Blew me from family and home
To Baltimore and streets unknown.

I was drunk when I came to
Without an edge against despair.
My heart was far away
And Baltimore didn't care.
I staggered alone beside her empty harbor
Past row homes crouched in steamy summer,
Faceless people in sweaty slumber.
Suspended in convulsive terror,
I sought out what was familiar:
The bar's breath, the nightlife's clamor.
And nothing seemed to matter.

In the evening the bells drew me to Charles Street.
The bells, memories, and perhaps the ghost of Poe.
I walked Charles Street that moon-lit night
Feeling the death of love, the draw of death.

By grace the moon at midnight wakened
A spirit with strength to crush the reaper's blade
And sight to find a refuge made
By kindred souls.

The day I purged myself of whiskey
I woke up nearly honest
And found my way home.

Audrey Lawrence

Heather Leigh

Like a Byrd

Tricia Dove

It happened on the 3rd
It happened on the 3rd
My friend was hunted and shot down like a byrd

I ran and hid
I ran and hid
But the Monster found me cause I'm just a kid

Its hand was deformed
All metal and black
It spit out its teeth and made me bleed

Now it's the 4th
Now it's the 4th
The monster is dead and I'm heading north

Cause the Blue Men came
The Blue Men came
They shot the Monster down cause he wasn't sane

But I'll remember the 3rd
I'll remember the 3rd
Cause my friend was hunted and shot down like a byrd

Mary Underwood

Haiku

Jason Van Slyke

Think of today now
Now think about tomorrow
What changes? Nothing

Pennies, No Sense

Carolyn Bozman

I see there will be no breathing tonight,
Another gas shell breaks.
I make sure that my mask is on tight.
What a sad sound a dying soldier makes.
Through my shelter I see a familiar face.
Oh, I miss my family back home.
Two horrified eyes in a similar place.
They wouldn't have let me leave had they only known.
I've cried every night since I've been here.
In a hard dirty cot on the ground.
But they say the enemy can smell fear,
So, I weep silently, can't make a sound.
The sun will still rise in the morning.
Revealing the yesterday night.
Then a bomb will go off without warning,
A sick pattern in the midst of a fight.
Drop all of your cares and keep going
Through the carnage, dirt, dust and decay.
Pretend to live life without knowing
That surely you might die today.
The expected explosives execute so many.
I've figured I'll be one more,
Because in battle life's treated as less then a penny.
1,000,000 pennies, that's the cost of the war.

Casey Williams

O, right, "freedom."

Noah Kain

Diamond-ring-finger-stiletto-heel-lipstick-boob-job-cue-embracing-kiss-equaling-happy-14-by-48-foot-billboard.
Scene.

Heated-leather-seat-boxed-silent-car-extravagant-weekend-getaway-eight-cylinder-luxury-with-miles-to-the-gallon-11-by-17-magazine.
Scene.

Stereotypical-I-love-big-screen-hoes-and-bling-got-shot-with-heroin-and-I-do-slash-am-rock-and-roll-tight-jeans-and-cigarette-sold.
Scene.

Hula-hoop-intellectual-stimulus-package-child-left-behind-degree-seeking-creative-attitude-got-stuck-in-macro-economics-platoon-deploy-aged-4-to-30.
Scene.

Zero-minutes-passing-full-bank-account-zero-down-white-fence-suburbia-divorce-prozac-early-un-assisted-suicide-free-market-heart-failure.
Scene.

The-"I-am-entitled-"retirement-at-65-while-world-plague-starves-on-channel-5-news-at-6-p-m-don't-bring-let-them-in-my-border-land-go-to-war-please-baby.
Scene.

The scary thing is, I don't even know who you are.

You-promenading-with-zealous-pocket-on-private-jet
laughing-at-idiot-boy-follow-the-leader.

O, right, "freedom."

Kellie Gable

Carol Bandura

Elyse Chaprnka

At Close Range

Christine Ivory

When she raised the barrel of the handgun, she wasn't sure if she would be able to shoot. She knew she had to; she must, and if she couldn't, she could die. She'd die eventually, as was true for anyone, but she didn't want it to be like that – a premature end because she couldn't bring herself to shoot.

It was all she could do to keep her hand steady, much less aim. In moments where split second reflexes counted, she'd always been behind on the draw, so to speak. In her school days, she was always picked last for sports because she had no hand-eye coordination. Now she had to make hand-eye-bullet-brains concentration – his brains, her bullet.

Like a dramatic movie action scene, time lurched to a stop and there was no sound for her here. If she screamed, no one would hear her, especially not him. She could kill or be killed. Not both. Well, in an unideal world, both could happen, but she came to this place to learn to kill, like it or not.

Finally, almost without her control, her finger closed around the trigger. The gun expelled the round with a dull pop and she took off her ear protection. The instructor nodded solemnly and brought in the target, a blue, vaguely human outline on a piece of paper marked with circles indicating where to shoot.

"That fellow sure was fortunate he broke into your house before you learned to shoot. Straight through the head." The shooting range instructor whistled to himself.

"I'm here to make sure he never gets fortunate again," she said, eyes fixed on the small hole burnt through the target, right between the eyes. ❖

Breathtakingly Unaware

Iyana Moore

i'm sure that once upon a time, i was breathtakingly beautiful.
before i discovered mirrors.
and fashion...fashion is the death of me.

when i was breathtakingly beautiful,
the most expensive thing on me was

my birthday suit.

the invention of clothes has brought down my value.
society tells me public nudity is wrong,
so i "cover" my body with finer things...

as if my body wasn't fine enough.

but honestly,
what am i covering?

the idea that my body is "indecent exposure."

once upon a time, i know, i was breathtakingly beautiful
and my soul followed suit...

not business suits, but a birthday suit.

i was free.
i danced around in the nude, completely unaware that i was naked.

i was liberated.
i was naive.
i was happy.

Brittany Lewis

Charlie's Pin-Up Girl Tattoo

Jasmine LeMaster

You were with me at Niagara
In a barrel, over the edge.
A steel-plated barrel,
and a hollow stomach,
you rode with me all the way down.
I was eighteen then, and you,
as fresh as a newborn.
We went to Florida after mom died,
to drive the bean picker,
moving north with the ripening crop.
Field after field of extending horizon
and nothing to look at
except you on my arm.
You, holding your umbrella,
wearing a bikini in the rain.
I grew tan, and you faded a bit from the sun
but we sweated together.
Winter at the packing plant was rough,
We froze in the cold room,
packing corn into brown boxes
and soy into green ones.
You grew with each box I lifted.
Now
you have blurred with age,
Spreading a bit, and losing definition.
Not unlike myself, I admit.
You have been with me
since the day I fell in love with you:
the only woman that ever stayed.

Kellie Gable

Princess Over Heels

Kayla Richardson

I have a fairytale.
Not necessarily a princess,
Who found her man charming.
Not a happy ending, just one that seems content.

Yes, I can be happy.
But there are times that are sad.
I have had tears and anger,
But overall it's not so bad.

I didn't instantly fall over heels.
I've learned nothing is perfect.
I've learned to love, and love I do.
Maybe I found some charm in you.

La Geleuse

Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

We called hers *la petite geleuse*—
for they are quite smaller than quarks.

One year after Aunt aged forty-seven years
and birthed her fifth child,
my mom was told that she was old.

Les geleuses, those nasty little beasts,
excel at making ladies weep.

Mom's two miscarriages birthed
three failed adoptions delivered
three more miscarriages.
Aunt had five babies but one loss,
Mom had one baby and five losses.

The only substance to the naked eye
des geleuses is the mucousy vermillion
of a fetus born into the toilet.

Of the pain, she said it was purple.
Purple for the bruises the hormone injections
left on her thighs, purple for the bruises
from leeches sucking blood samples
from veins as thin as hair.

Les geleuses make their presence known
when you feel a Charlie horse about three or four
inches below your belly button, but no amount of
bananas or stretching can make it heal.

Some people's relatives drive them to the doctor's.
Forty days without menstruation drove my mother.
She was afraid to leap, to dream again
for her wings never carried her past my birth.
But her heart hoped and loved,
and her heart remembered my life until
the doctor spoke,
"premenopausal." Why is a

"pause"

in those stabbing five syllables? Fertility doesn't resume.
And does "pre" soften, "you're getting old"?

Les geleuses travel in packs, in swarms, in clouds,
and coat the womb's walls so those 1-2-4-8-16 cells
never get nourishment to become a baby.

Brianna Bolling

My Shadow Is All I See

Justin Poe

Touch and I crumble, the wind picks up my dust
This body made of ash, heart charred thorough
Stare and I weep, the sea engulfs, carries me out
These eyes must soon cease; I greatly fear its depth
Speak and I greet, earth entangles my feet
Thoroughly I am bound; the earth wills not release
And cast I stand without You
My back is toward the sun
My shadow is all I see
With You there beside me

Dad

Harold Shaffer

sits on the porch gathering strength.
Like a worker out of season
he stares at days that lie
in stacks and sheaths
behind eyes glazed over
like ice-filmed windows.

Dad sees no shadows,
only players:
son, brother, husband, father,
each dressed as he remembers.

And nothing arrests his gaze from infinity,
not the lichen-scabbed pines,
nor the bright swatch amidst the poplars.
There is no immediacy to his landscape
spread out before him
like a dining room table after Christmas dinner.

Lauren DeSha

Follow Me

Nicole Propst

Follow me into the rising sun of youth's blazing glory.
Hasten to my side; take hold of my hand so we can be free.
Come with me and explore this new horizon stretching forth,
Illuminating fresh paths our eyes have never known away to the North.
Dance with me as creation awakens and life arouses from its slumber.
Laugh with me; let the world see your enjoyment of its spring and summer.
Guide me through the pending night, as the sphere of fire fades out of sight.
Protect me from the robbers of innocence who seek only carnal delight.
Romance me; how long will you deny yourself the looming pleasures of the night?
But firstly, commit to me; declare our love to the heavens and mankind.
Remember this, and I will walk with you through all of earthly time.

The Mile Wide Storm

David Brannon

Sue had finally gotten a three-day weekend and was driving the kids to visit with their grandmother, a trip they were looking forward to for some weeks. It was late on Thursday – Sue and the kids were always late it seemed – when she noticed the heavy, scudding clouds turning an ominous shade of green. Traffic was passing her on I-70 faster than usual in her beat up old '96 Chevy. She picked up speed, so as not to create too much of a moving obstacle on the highway.

"This is weird, where's everybody going in such a hurry?"

Soon, a weather alert interrupted the top-40 rock her girls insisted on: "…severe thunderstorm activity and tornado warnings on a line from the Texas panhandle to Kansas City. Citizens are advised to take immediate precautions for these severe weather conditions and plan on taking shelter in the case of tornado sightings…"

The dark, roiling, green clouds were an indication that the severe weather was developing right on top of them. The speeding cars frightened Sue; she guessed they were trying to outrun the storm. Steve, her husband, always told her, "Don't run from a tornado. Find shelter, a basement, a storm drain, a ditch, anything to protect you from the debris in the wind. The rain won't hurt you and usually the wind won't hurt you. It's the stuff blowing around that will kill you."

She didn't want to alarm the girls riding in the back seat, but she needed help. "Girls, it looks like we have a bad storm coming. I need you to look out for the bad part of the storm. Can you help Mommy do that?"

Her daughters knew about tornadoes and sensed the concern in her voice. "Ok, Mommy. We're good helpers."

"Thank you, girls. Mommy's going to look out the front window and drive. I need you to look out the back and side windows. Look for really heavy rain and the black clouds that go all the way to the ground. Can you do that for Mommy?"

Eight year old Tracy asked, very quietly, "You mean tornado clouds, Mommy?"

"Yes, tell Mommy if you see one."

She could hear Tracy explaining to Kim, her five year old sister, what to look for. Sue wasn't sure if Tracy was just playing mommy or really understood the need for vigilance while staying as calm as possible. She was glad and proud that Tracy was taking charge in the back seat. Sue was busy enough watching out for traffic and keeping her rattletrap car on the road in the increasingly powerful wind gusts.

The speed limit in the wide-open expanse of Kansas is eighty miles per hour. Sue rarely went that fast because she was uncomfortable with the speed and the old car could barely do eighty on a good day. Now, she kept her foot down hard on the gas pedal. The car rattled, vibrated and wheezed in protest. Her fingers white around the wheel, Sue felt the front tires shimmying from the high speed while the gusting wind was trying to blow the car off the road. The car felt like it was dancing with a partner that didn't know which way to go next. Willing the car to dance in the middle of the lane, she tightened her grip and locked her eyes straight down the middle of the highway.

"Mommy, Mommy! I see one! I see a big black cloud, just like you said." The girls broke into excited chatter about the funnel cloud out the side window.

Sue's heart jumped to her throat. She looked out the window and to her horror saw not one, but two twisters charging across the land. One was huge; she could see it sucking up soil, trees and buildings, and spitting out lightning and ugly, smaller twisting funnels. It continued to grow, even during Sue's brief look.

The radio provided another, unwelcome, update, "…Twister

sighted near I-70 with winds in excess of 300 miles per hour…"

Go faster, car. Go faster. If it gets too close, we'll just have to pull over and find a ditch until it passes, she thought. It wasn't much of a plan, but it was all she had. She wished Steve were with them. It wouldn't change anything, but she would feel less terrified with him here. She tossed another look over her shoulder, hoping the twister would pass behind them.

No such luck. It was moving fast and growing even faster. Even if it missed them by half a mile, Sue knew they were in grave danger. Even the outer edge of a tornado could lift the car off the road and kill them. She pressed on, adrenaline pumping, glancing to the side every few seconds. It was going to be close.

She saw something on the horizon, a bump, a soft irregularity. This flat country that spawned tornadoes offered little protection, but something was out there, miles ahead. It might be shelter, and if so, it was worth running for. The horizon was about fifteen miles away. This thing was closer, maybe only five or six. Sue did a quick calculation, eighty miles per hour, five miles, maybe four minutes. All the while checking on the racing twister, Sue determined to make it to what she hoped was safety. Safety in four minutes, if we're lucky.

A bridge! A big, old, ugly country road bridge crossing the interstate. It'll do, she thought in eloquent country simplicity. Now let's see if the brakes work at this speed.

With only seconds to spare, she pulled the car as close to the guardrail as possible and got the girls out. Lifting them over the railing, she told the girls to run to the top of the sloping concrete. The girls were quicker than Sue to the top. She found a space among the girders beneath the bridge and lifted the girls in. The darkness and spider webs scared the girls more than the coming tornado, but Sue had no time for lady-like niceties. She climbed in with the girls and held them tight.

The wind slammed dirt and branches against the bridge and support columns. Even though it was early evening, well before sunset, it got alarmingly dark under the bridge, almost as though the black storm was sucking the light from their little shelter. The wind's noise increased, rumbling louder with the approaching twister, making the bridge vibrate in its fury.

On both sides of the highway other drivers were stopping, seeking the shelter of the bridge. Some people climbed up among the iron beams like Sue, others hunkered down in the shallow ditch along the road. Now the twister was fully upon them and Sue lowered her head and closed her eyes.

Sue smelled the ozone of the lightning as the storm's blackness closed around them and the sweet tangy smell of fresh rain, usually welcomed in farm country. The bridge groaned and rattled as the wind alternately pelted them with rain and debris then tried to suck them out of their hiding place.

Everything hurt. The wind's noise blanked everything out and created painful pressure in Sue's ears. The rain and debris pelting her stung like a million large and angry mosquitoes. Sue knew the girls were crying, but could not hear them above the freight-train roar of the wind. They held tightly to each other, pressing against the cold concrete, feeling the wet mud seep through their clothing, the dangerous air raw and thundering around them. Sue cherished the warmth of her daughter's bodies pressed against hers as never before.

In an eternity of only minutes, the twister passed. Sue raised her head, reluctant to let go of the girls. On both sides of the highway, as far as she could see, lay parts of houses and trees and debris of mysterious origin. She looked down at her car and saw a small highway sign embedded in the fender. The post, like the shaft of an arrow, was sticking out with a mile-marker sign in place of the feathers. A bizarre headline popped into her head, "Family found alive at mile-marker 107." She started laughing amongst her tears, the giddiness of survival overtaking her emotions. ❖

Teacher

Jim Curran

My life is a window
For birds to fly in
And perch on my bedstead
Singing songs I know nothing of
But I'm willing to learn

Give me feathers for skin
That now weighs
With heartache and memory
Of ice ship mornings
Pulling waffles from freezers

Allow me to eat seeds
Not remains of what
Seeds once produced
Flowering as energy
In my blood

Allow me to sing
In verses heard as I
Rested in eaves at midnight

Keep me from highways
With everyone's cars
Leaving those who won't change
Broken and ridiculed

My life is an open window
No matter how cold
No fear of snow
A song for the rain
A feather in the wind
For a bird with too few

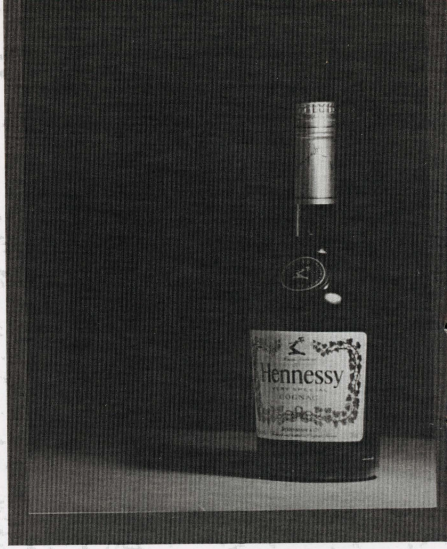
Colorblind

Anonymous

What is the color of hope?
I was told that it is yellow.
I did not tell her that yellow
Is the color of morning light
As it lances through my eyes
To flood my skull with the tang of blood –
Stemming from the orange crunch of glass on teeth
And the red crystal slipping on fingertips.
Yellow is the color of superficiality
And the sour liquid of morning vomit
And the permeating stench of sulfur
From viscera that conspire to rot.

I wonder if hope is white,
But white is nothing, a blank
Of walls and ceiling and floor.
White is the color of cool marble,
A sanctuary from the piercing sunlight.
White is a mausoleum,
A monument to what cannot be,
Though it is also a sheet of expectations
That I cannot start because I cannot finish.

I do not want to look at the past
But I have never believed in the future;
I can try to hide the white walls
Of this room that can never be found
But I don't know how to look for
The color of hope.



Joyce Yan

Mahogany

Stephen Carnaggio

Lenee Freeman

Now let me teach you this
it is very important, so please pay attention:

In the poem, we find a stream
Which is very nice, because streams rush the water along the path
Which is something to consider because it is a good source of alternative energy
The world can use a lot more of that
I know that I needed some more back in the sixties
Oh yes, I was a hippie,
and we did have fun as hippies, let me tell you
Of course it didn't matter, what with the war
War is so terrible, if we'd all just get along
we'd be in a world of peace
Where was I?
Oh, Right
So streams symbolize life,
although the river also symbolizes death
I've experienced death a lot
I was there when my parents passed away
Which reminds me of my surgery
All of us had morphine in the hospital
I may have done stuff as a hippie,
but that hospital brand was
better than anything else
But I wanted to tell you, before I forgot
That stream by my home, we'd swim in it
It's sensual, in a way.
But politicians don't use their common sense
I'm worried about that president
He laughed when they asked
"When will you legalize pot?"
I did a ton of that back in my glory days,
but that's Hyperbole
Oh, I forgot my place again
There we are, on stanza two.Notice how the poet trails off from the first statement
As if going through the workings of the mind?
That's called *Écriture féminine*

Bryan Vana

For My Soldier

Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

I miss quiet gasps under golden light:
neither evening nor morning—strung between,
like a fetus in the birth canal.

I miss your touches like Godiva and Riesling:
the pores of my skin reaching after you leave,
like a baby searching for the nipple.

I miss your intensity:
gazes like a shot of espresso, jolting my pulse
like a toddler's first jumps.

I miss greeting you after war:
sadness lifted like Giles Cory dying naturally,
like an eight-year-old's skinned knees soothed.

I miss the piano you urged me to play:
hammer hitting wire like *pointe* shoes on wood,
a pre-teen's first bourées.

I miss releasing you to fight for the future:
trusting in results yet unforeseen,
a daughter sent to college.

I miss your smell of mountain air:
fresh-cut grass, no trace of civilization;
as I watch our daughter get married beneath a maple tree,
you lie under another tree,
its black ribbon waving goodbye in the breeze.

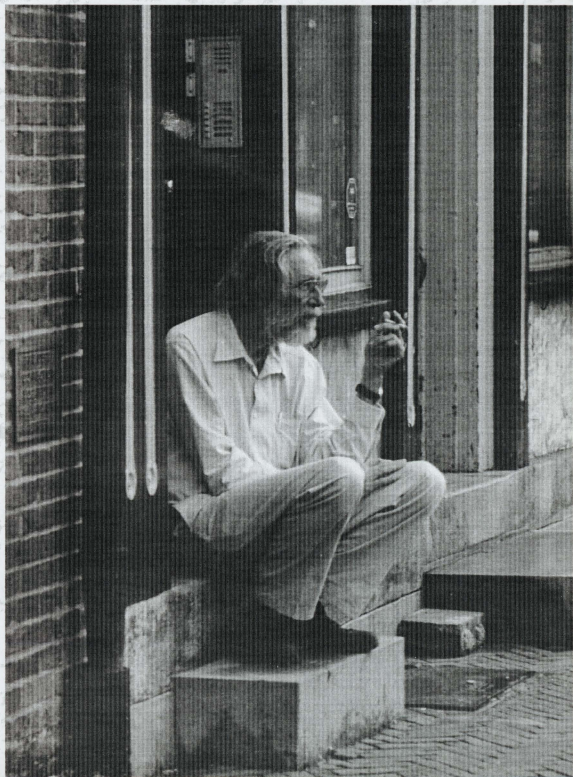
Something to Hold onto

Wes Parlette

Everyone's searching for something to hold onto,
Something that has a grip,
That won't let you shake or slip.
Everything you trust seems to let you down,
Knock you down, or glance away as you drown.
Heart broken again and again,
Will the cycle ever end?
You just want to survive, to breathe,
To scream, "My life is a wreck!"
You want to sit still for a moment,
Just a single moment, to rest.
There's so much stress. Why is there so much stress?!
But I have found peace which can't be explained.
It comes from God, the beginning and the end,
The solid, unshakable rock on which I stand.
He's always there, waiting,
With an outstretched hand.
And once we grab it he never lets go.
He may seem distant,
But we've just been looking away,
Distracted by the world,
Trying to forget we're falling,
Frantically scrambling,
For a parachute that never opens,
Reaching for all the world has to offer.
Maybe we have already hit the ground,
Crushed by depression and disgrace.
But if we could look up for a moment,
Just a single moment,
And look past the walls that confine us,
To the God who wants to give us new life,
Forgiving our mistakes,
Through His only son, Jesus, who came to our level.
An all-powerful giant, kneeling next to a rebellious world,
Becoming weak to make us strong,
Taking a beating He didn't deserve, He was nailed to a cross.
But still He said, "Father, forgive them,
For they do not know what they are doing."
The heartbeat
Of the only man to show true love
Stopped.
The earth shook,
Sin's penalty paid.
Jesus, the great high priest,
The final blood sacrifice,
Took our place,
Then came back to life.
Giving us something to hold onto.

- Romans 8:38-39 -

Corrine Thompson



Solutions to Life

Maura Bernstein

I believe in nature, because in truth, she raised me. My whole life has been marked by a never-ending series of the most exotic and mystical landscapes one could ever hope to behold. And each place is so different, so phenomenally awe-inspiring, that a clash of memories overwhelms me whenever I care to remember.

I remember riding a camel in the Negev, greedily taking in the most beautiful stretch of stifling hot sand and rocks I've ever seen. The quiet majesty of a moon-soaked beach on the island of Bonaire, each grain of sand illuminated like dark pink gems as they escape easily from my disbelieving hands. Or careening leisurely down to the Liberty Reservoir, so generously placed a short walk from my house, and baking comfortably on a sun-splashed rock, scooping handfuls of water and watching them melt away. For no matter how many far-away places I visit, no matter what variety of displays of nature I sample, this is the nature that raised me. The towering poplars, maples, oaks, and elms that guide me to the water below have always been there, silent yet apparent, all along. Nature disguises itself in so many varied forms; the ocean seduces you into temporary Nirvana, the desert humbles you and sends you to your knees, and the forest patiently waits and listens.

The beauty we take little care to recognize always proves to be the most wondrous. The little things, you should always appreciate "the little things"– isn't that what they say? Things like a snake sunning himself on a trail of overgrown grass and sharp stones, oblivious to the world around him or the gentle ebb and flow of the ocean as it scatters colonies of crabs and birds in its path. I believe the world would be much more interesting if we all stopped to notice a butterfly resting on a patch of electric green moss on an afternoon hike. The simplicity and individuality of nature reveals sensitivity and passion in the heart, it sheds the ego, and questions our purpose. It exposes us to our actions and thoughts and offers counsel in an annoyingly comforting, "I told you so" way.

I believe in the preservation and reverence of nature. I believe in the cacophony of sound that comes from every birch or palm, every brook or river, every ocean, every bird or fish, every fern. But I also believe in the importance of the silence. Or rather, the way nature seems to go about being so damn loud about being silent, as if afraid you'll miss and forget to appreciate it. I even love the fleeting moments of quiet desperation at its under appreciation and imminent demise. It's times like this that turn us all into activists, if only for that short while.

I believe in nature, more specifically, I believe that nature will deliver us all, if we take the time to cooperate. ❖

Mary Underwood

Maypoles & Pistols

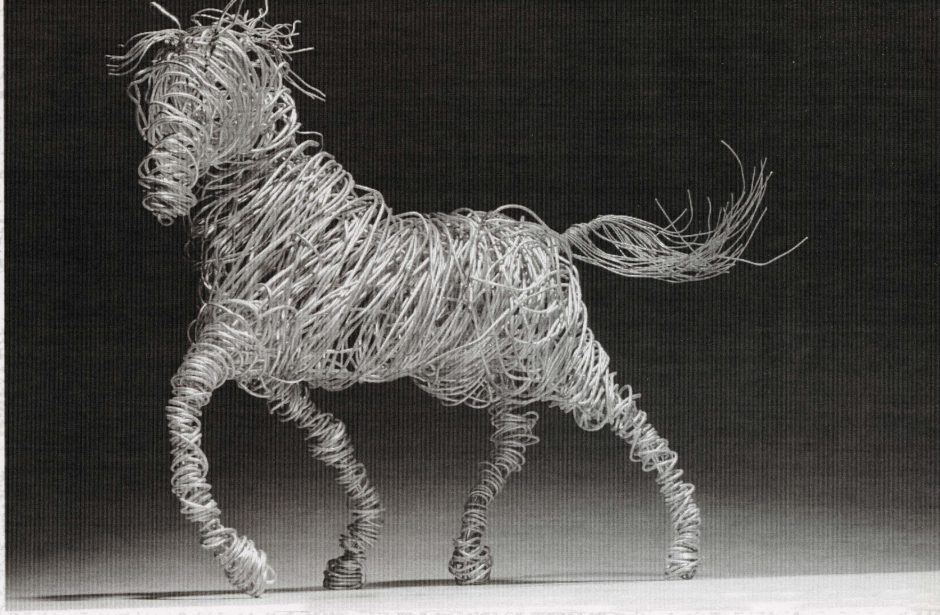
Kayla Richardson

Grab your gun and let her rip.
Turning tides turn the trips,
A magnum comes much too quick…
Piercing veins such a horror trick.

A double round and round it goes.
The light above trickles home,
Holes filled with summer blood,
Around the pole beloved Patriarch.

A day, a duel, another round home.
Shot for shot we watch her go,
To sell the sea for nothing above,
Can we cure this dance from love?

A night for pits and silly tricks,
On what we've learned on these trips,
Message delivered much too quick…
Take off the safety and let her rip.

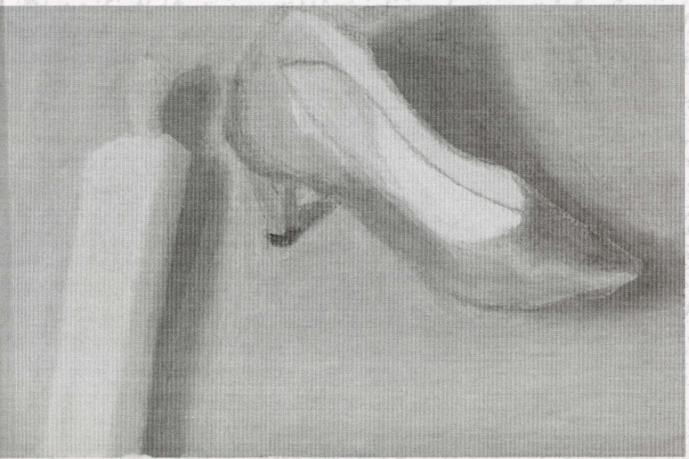


Audrey Lawrence

Behind the Curtains

Stefani Beser

Tell me how I became the Master Illusionist
My cousin - the painter
My grandmother – the sculptor
My sister – the photographer
And I – the only heir of disproportionate reality
Spreading watercolors on your
Hands around my neck
Molding your rounded shapes
Until they crumble
Choosing the best angles
Highlighting in shadows
And whitewashing the fences between us
So that they reach a vanishing point



Lauren DeSha

Bryan Vana

Colors

Elyse Chaprnka

Red as the rage that swirls around us,
Green is the serenity that dissipates,
Blue is the sadness that consumes us,
A heart breaks

Haiku

Bill Talbott

Very few degrees
Limit our comfortable life.
Watch the mercury.

Ba Ba Black Sheep

Erin Perkins

The Black Sheep walked through the middle of town
And many were delighted.
But I was not for some odd reason,
I was terribly affrighted.

The Sheep was odd, not like the rest
And it shook me to the core.
And then and there I set my mind
that it simply must be shore.

Late one night I crept from my bed.
Steely shears in hand.
I took the shears to the Black Sheep's wool
but all did not end as planned.

I never meant to harm the Sheep.
Really I never would.
But the shears had slipped and cut his throat
And now the wool's no good.

A Daydreamer's Day

Jesse Graber

Barren lands and colorless skies,
Tired dreams and weary eyes,
Starless nights and windless days
All twisted into one dull haze
And blotted my hope from view.

I put that dream aside to rest
As, for the moment, that seemed best,
Too many times those dear stars fell
Too many times I thought I'd tell
The world what my heart clung to.

Should I let this firefly fly?
And give it a chance to grace the sky?
How else would this life have a chance
To sing and hope and even dance?
Would this dear dream ever breathe?

Shadows wrestled away the light,
Dampened chills blew away the sight
That my wet eyes longed to behold—
My heart-beats turned from warm to cold
Without that dream to warm me…

Somehow a song escaped my lips,
And slowly joy escaped the rips
That my sore heart had longed to bear
Where bliss came in and did repair—
Your voice mended my heart's sore.

Overflowed my fantasies were;
Reality was all a blur
When your laughing eyes sparkled bright,
Stirring awake the sleeping light
I always knew my heart bore,

My wishes must have been too great—
They somehow got confused with fate;
My daydreams leaked out of my mind
To pave a path where I would find
That my heart could still sing.

I never saw such clear, bright eyes;
The dust of a star in disguise,
So soft I wish that I could fall
Into your gaze and deftly crawl
Away from everything.

I was the object of your smile—
I wished time would cease for a while
So I could frame this picture here
Of you beside me, standing near.
My heart holds on to this day.

I always thought you never saw
The picture that I tried to draw,
The message I encoded there—
I didn't think you'd ever care,
But I hoped anyway.

Your eyes may not see what I see
When your eyes dance beautifully,
But still you're looking right at me,
Into my heart; into my being.
I wonder what you are seeing?
In your eyes I see all my dreams.

Speeding Down Memory Lane

Stephen Carnaggio

I tell you, it couldn't have been me! I'm just a victim in all of this, right? I mean, do I look like the kind of woman who'd do such a thing? My life is boring. I live alone in an apartment, and I have five cats! I hardly go out of my house, except to maybe see my friends and family or go out to get some groceries.

The only disturbance I was ever involved in was when that young Spenelzie kid and his friends ran around in the streets. I had nothing to do with that fence, I already told the officer all I knew.

On nice days, I always sit out on my rocking chair and maybe do some knitting, if I'm bored. I'm usually bored, as I've said before, so I'm out there, rocking away and enjoying what time I have to myself, since I'm usually by myself. Well, it was that day you're asking about that I decided to actually go and do something about the Spenelzie kid and his pack of hooligans.

Renae Hunter

I woke up that morning to the purring of Mr. Preston, my oldest and most loving little kitty. He was going like a little motor boat, so I just had to feed him. I hobbled along to my kitchen and reached for that special blend of food that my lovelies like.

So I reached for the food, and I saw a sheep in my back yard. You heard me, a sheep! I don't know how it got there, but there it was. I wanted to find out what it was doing out of its pen, so I walked out and just stood there, staring at this sheep.

I soon noticed that the sheep wasn't the only thing in my yard. There, behind the sheep, hidden behind a trash can, was the shape of one of those boys. He was hiding from me, so I walked on over there and kicked that empty can to the side and gave him a stern look. My memory is so bad nowadays, I don't know if I recall the specifics of what I said.

The boy, though I suppose I should say young man, judging by his age, said with his big sorrowful deep brown eyes "Mrs. Krickre, what are you doing out here?" He talked to me like he ain't done nothing wrong.

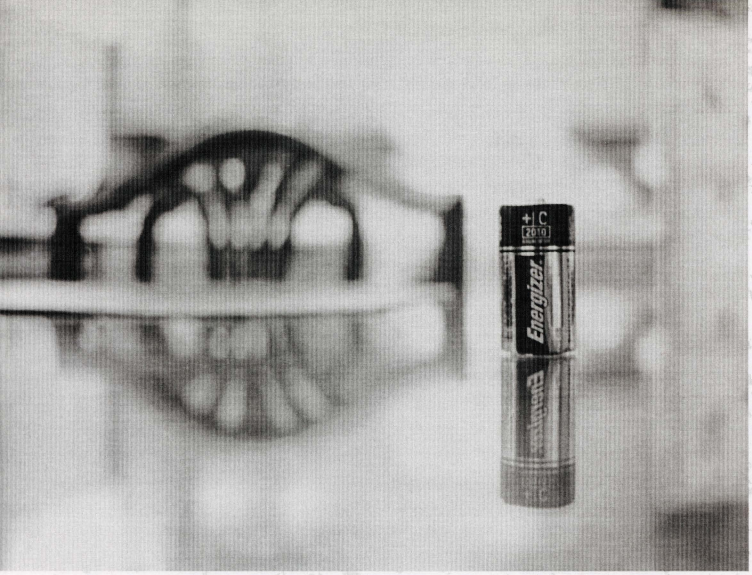
Well, I picked him up by the ear and pulled him over toward that little lamb grazing on my yard and said. "Why is there a sheep in my yard!? Sheep don't belong in my yard!"

That boy scurried around in my hold, unable or unwilling to break free from my matronly clasp. "Uh," he began, possibly to make an excuse. "I don't know why there is a sheep in your yard, please let go of me, Mrs. Krickre."

I was going to take that hooligan's word with a grain of salt, so I asked him, "Are you telling me that you're out in my yard and you don't know why there is a sheep out here?"

The boy finally seemed to agree and so I let go of his ear. "There now, isn't it better to listen to your elders?"

So, he took me out of my yard and down the path that wraps around



Brianna Bolling

the apartment building where I live. I asked him where he was taking me, and all he said was "I'm sure Ricky" – that's the name of that Spenelzie kid – "is over this way."

The strangest thing was though, that he was leading me to a part of the neighborhood that I did not recognize. I asked him where we were, and he politely responded, without looking to me. "We're heading to Ricky's place."

I followed him dutifully, and looked at my surroundings. The tall fences made it hard to see out beyond the neighborhood, but I suppose that was to help with those cars. Oh, they were so noisy, those cars. I never really did any driving myself, but Edmund, my husband, sure did love his car and his job.

Well, anyway, the young man and I finally found ourselves at Ricky's place. It was nice, quite unlike what I had expected as it was very business-like.

There in the middle of the room was a desk, and sitting in that desk was a man, who reminded me of my Edmund. He had a finely combed dusty blond hairstyle and the trimmed and proper mustache of a gentleman. "Oh my," I said to him. "Ricky, you've grown so much since I've last seen you." And I had meant it. He was quite the looker, but ooh, I didn't want my husband thinking bad things abut me, so I didn't say anything.

That nice young man smiled and asked, in his nice calm voice. "Mrs. Krickre, is something the matter?"

"Why yes there is something the matter." I replied. "My husband has been out for quite some time, do you know where he is? I remember him saying that he wanted to take a drive with me, but I suppose he left on his own. He was always quite impatient, you know."

And to that, his face seemed to express concern. He...he said—oh I can't just say it, can I please dab my eyes first?

Alright.—He said "Ma'am, I'm sorry to inform you, but your husband has been in an accident. That's why we brought you here."

I said to him, "Can I please see my husband?" He nodded and told me to follow him. He agreed.

So the doctor put on his coat and walked behind me, pushing my wheelchair gently. After all, I was holding something precious in my hands, and was still weak from the operation.

As we passed through the hospital's double doors, there was my husband. Edmund was standing in the waiting room, talking to my father-in-law. You know, he drove me over there as soon as I said it was time for our bundle to see the world. Oh he was so happy to be a father, though he drove so fast on that street.

I told him he should slow down, but he laughed. I told him that his reckless driving would be the death of him someday.

You see now that I couldn't have let that sheep in my yard or destroyed that fence around the petting zoo. How could

continued...

I, with a baby? And speaking of my husband, have you seen him around? Now if you excuse me, I think I'll take a nap now. It's so peaceful here on my porch, don't you agree? But now it is time to sleep.

But before I go off, I want to let you know that, well I wasn't truthful before. I don't know what happened that day, when Edmund…didn't…mmm goodnight.

As the elderly woman lay in her bed, the man whom she had taken on a journey looked down upon her. He smiled warmly upon the peaceful form of Mrs. Krickre, who had quite the adventure wandering out of her room. He walked out of the small bedchamber and into the hallway. Next to her room was a collage of pictures submitted by her families. He stopped and looked at it. There he saw various pictures including a young Mrs. Krickre holding her baby in the hospital, the picture of a dashing young man leaning against a now antique racecar in a faded black and white photo and many family portraits.

Next to that was a newspaper clipping, with the headline reading: "Former Racer crashes into fence, gives whole community front seats to the petting zoo." He laughed as he saw the yellowed image associated with it: Mr. Krickre smirking and looking down at the young child clinging onto a sheep, which looked up at his father with what he could only guess were bright and cheery eyes.

As he was admiring the picture, he heard the sounds of footsteps down the hall. Immediately he knew who it was. "Ah, your mother is sleeping now. Sorry about calling you down when she went missing, but she was out in the back looking at the animals we brought in for the garden party today. She said she was looking for her husband too, so I brought her back here where she would be safe."

He nodded with a morose smile. "Mom still thinks that Dad is alive sometimes. You got her in quickly? I'm glad she forgets that she was driving the car that day. It really tore her up when she

Audrey Lawrence

first realized it. It was in the hospital where they first found out that she had Alzheimer's. The doctor said it must have gone undiagnosed for quite a while. They said that maybe she had it before the accident. The trauma to the head must have advanced the disease as well. When she found out about Dad, she told me about how she made him promise he would let her take him everywhere."

She looked at her watch. "Well, I came down here during work, but if she's sleeping I won't bother her. If I want to get back in time, I'm going to have to fly down that highway. Have a good evening." She waved and turned, walking down the hall.

He shook his head and chuckled to himself before responding. "And have a good day yourself, Mrs. Spenelzie." ❖

Erin Perkins

To Ponder.
Yes. That is the tortuous task
that so often engages my mind.
But not today.
Oh no.
Today it has taken on an entirely new level.
Today I am ruminating.
To Ruminate – to chew over or contemplate

Yes that is what I am doing.
Today I have thrown myself off
the edge of pondering
and fallen squarely into the lap
of Rumination.
And what do I ruminate while there?
Well I'll tell you.
Everything.

My mind has become a steam locomotive of thought
And I'm hurtling myself down the tracks
Clickety clack clickety clack
With thoughts prompted by Colbie Caillat and Gwendolyn Brooks
Whooh Whooh
And I'm asking things like
Does anyone think of me the way I think of them
Clickety clack clickety clack
– which is to say a very pondering sort of manner
for example
"I wonder if Johnny Depp bought Oreos today?"
or "What color was Marilyn Monroe's toothbrush?"
Whooh Whooh
And of course the answer to this is

No! Of course no one thinks like that because no one cares
Whooh Whooh
about me.

Because I am that special kind of ordinary
which is to say a cut above the rest
but not quite good enough.
Oh look a kangaroo!
Whooh Whooh

And now
I have broken off the brake
to the locomotive and
I continue hurtling forward.
Clickety clack clickety clack
with the thought of "my God
the world is so big." and
"how do I get noticed?" and
"When do I come in?"
Whooh whooh

And like that my mind has whistled
on to
how I think so much and
"Not everyone thinks like this?" and
"I know she thinks like this." and
"I know they don't think like this." and
"I bet my father thinks like this." and
Oh look a tiger!
Whooh whooh

And I think about the future and
I think about the past and
I think about billions of years from now
and will they still know Matisse makes art
and Poe is a genius?
And if they can still know that
then where do I come in?
Or do I come in at all?
Hiisssss chug chug chug sssshhhhhhhh
Do I come in at all?

I'd like to think so.

Bryan Vana

LIVE

S. Tylor Githens

Live with me;
Dream in the fields filled of hope.
Ponder in the woods of reason.
Laugh in the rays of never ending sunlight.
Sleep in the glowing beams of midnight moon.
Grow in the valley of youth.
Live with me in the world—of us.

WALK

S. Tylor Githens

Walk with me tonight.
Let our shadows cast two figures against the pavement;
Let our laughter echo against the sleepy houses.
As they are silent,
As quiet moonlight dances in their windows.
Kick a stone and bounce it across the endless street;
Smile back at me and know that everything will be alright.
Walk with me tonight.
And let's talk about our pasts,
How the future of us will be.
Let's sing songs we know and fill in words to the missing parts.
Walk with me tonight.
Hold my hand,
Walk one foot in front of the other as we step in unison.
Stare at the moon and the stars—for they are the sign that brought us here tonight.
Walk with me tonight—and always;
For our journey goes on forever.

Sonado

Stephen Carnaggio

Falling in the world of careless dreaming
I lay upon the covered mattress sheets.
There the darkness guides my mind's inner eye
to the wanderings of an unknown place.
The forms all disappear; now there is wind,
and rain strikes the car as I drive alone,
crashing through the missiles of Heaven's face,
and the wind greets me at my destiny.
My world shakes and my mind is spinning round
like the funnel I see. It approaches,
Twirling lost artifacts in its vortex.
I am filled with dread, but also excited.
You never know what the world shall seem
when you predict it through the lens of dream.

Joyce Yan

Elyse Chaprnka

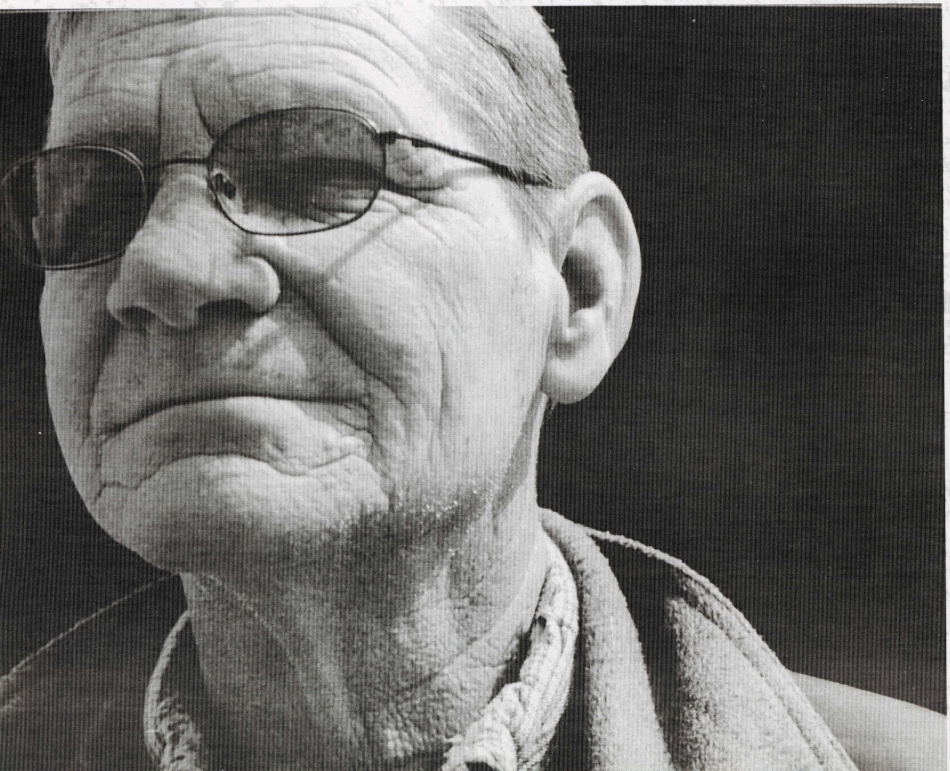
Haiku

Jason Van Slyke

Shadows of the past
Yesterday becomes today
the future's shadow

Jury Rubeling-Kain

Renae Hunter



Haiku

Bill Talbott

Alone in a crowd,
I reflect upon our love.
We are together.

Night Journey

Harold Shaffer

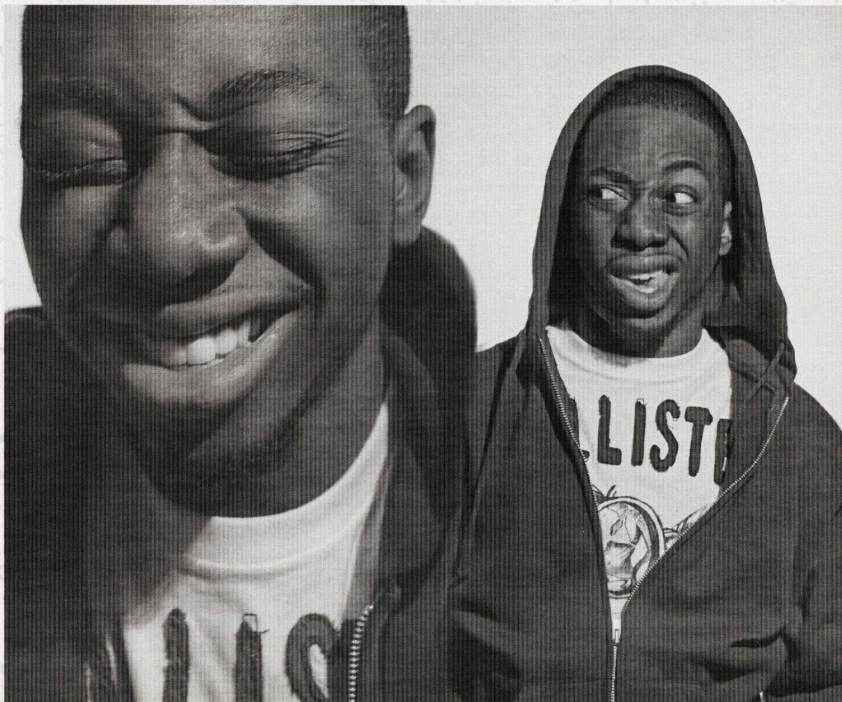
The night falls heavily into space
like a tired man into a chair,
both certain to continue falling
as though there was nothing there.
It is the night that shares
with shapes which fall undone
the solitary matters
unremembered in the sun.
The tired man soon will rise
and close his eyes to light,
sensing that he has shared
his secrets with the night.

In Memory

Elyse Chaprnka

I wish that I do not have to see
With that you are bound
While I see you in the ground
I should have heard the cry of the banshee
To feel the woe
And see the dark mourning skies
I now can feel your demise
That is never going to let me go
I never want to remember
Finding you on that day
Made my heart sway
While the memory is burning ember
To see that life cannot always prevail
That they cannot live if they are frail

Lenee Freeman



The Stevenson University *Spectrum*, Literary and Fine Arts Magazine, is published during the Spring Semester. Here are the Guidelines for submissions for the Spring 2011 issue.

Literary

1 Essays, fiction, drama, and poetry are accepted for consideration for publication. Please limit prose to no more than five double-spaced pages.

2 Submissions of original, unpublished work from SU students, alumni, faculty and staff are welcome!

3 Each entry must be submitted electronically as an e-mail or e-mail attachment. All submissions should be accompanied by the contributor's name, e-mail address, year in school, major and permission to publish in *Spectrum*.

4 NO NAME should appear on any page of the manuscript.

5 A panel of students will judge all submissions anonymously.

6 Copyrights for work published in *Spectrum* will revert to the individual authors. (See Gerald Majer, Advisor).

7 Send submissions by e-mail to:
spectrum@stevenson.edu
or
Gerald Majer, Professor of English, *Spectrum* Advisor
gmajer@stevenson.edu

8 DEADLINE: October 25, 2010.

Art

1 Two-Dimensional Artwork: including paintings, prints (such as collographs, woodcuts, linoleum cuts, silkscreened work and more), drawings, photographs and collages.

2 Three-Dimensional Artwork: including sculptures or relief sculptures in any medium. Unfortunately, we cannot accept 3-D artwork too large to fit on a tabletop.

3 Electronic Artwork: including computer-generated artwork created in software programs such as Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop.

- ❖ Artwork created in raster-based software such as Photoshop should have a minimum DPI (dots-per-inch) of 300.

4 To submit visual artwork for publication in *Spectrum*, work must be submitted by the end of the Fall Semester.

- ❖ 2-D and 3-D Artwork can be delivered to Amanda Hostalka, Associate Professor of Art by the end of the Fall Semester. Please put your full name, your phone number and your e-mail on the back of each piece or bottom of each sculpture.
- ❖ Electronic Artwork should be attached to an e-mail sent to:

  Amanda Hostalka, Associate Professor of Art
  ahostalka@stevenson.edu

  by the the end of the Fall Semester. Be sure to include your name, phone number and e-mail address in the message.
- ❖ 2-D and 3-D artwork will be photographed, after which you'll be notified to pick up your artwork.
- ❖ Copyrights for artwork published in *Spectrum* will revert to the individual artists.

STEVENSON
UNIVERSITY
Imagine your future. Design your career.®